415 "The best pieces of equipment of which they can boast are
923 some small vessels of "palo santo" [lignum vital—a kind of wood--Translator] and a few small clay pots with very narrow mouths and two little handles which serve them as water flasks on their frequent raiding forays."

"Men and women alike shave their heads completely. They
302 use, for that purpose, the sharp jaw of a certain fish, and their own teeth serve them to pare their nails. They cover themselves as best
291 they are able from their waists to their knees. The men, on gala
286 occasions, often wear a sort of sleeveless jacket and hang a kind of
415 bag from one shoulder in which they keep a crude wooden pipe, fire
[276] making equipment and other nicknacks. Both the bag and the coat are knitted, made from agave or chaguar fiber, and curiously marked.
302 They pull out their beards, eyelashes and eyebrows, and either to improve their looks or in order to appear more terrible in battle, they blacken their faces and chests with coal dust."

"Their favorite food is fish, and lacking this, all kinds of wild
262 fruits or roots other than the poisonous ones. Their principal vegetable food, on which they can count for a quarter of each year and which they store to some small extent, is the fruit of the algarrobo, chañar and mistol. They also eat, and that without repugnance, lizards, locusts, crickets [593], mice, and even eggs after they have been abandoned, together with other filth. They eat fish and any other kind of meat
[252] or roots, roasted or boiled, and know of no other way of preparing food.
[261] They can withstand hunger admirably, and when they are unable to get other food they spend their time lying about chewing some herb or leaf from the forest."

"From the algarroba [pod which grows on the algarrobo tree--
273 Translator] they make a beverage which is extremely delicious to their
579 taste and which intoxicates them and makes them very fierce. Their drunken parties almost always end in a fierce fight which would have dire results were it not that the women, who never drink of that liquor, are careful to hide the arrows and all other offensive weapons and to hold back and separate those engaged in fighting."

"When the algarroba starts to turn yellow, they place in a cen-
533 222 tral place among the huts, the pimpin, which is a log, concave at its upper end, covered with a piece of hide. A drummer with a belt about

head and at the foot of their rustic bed they hang their possessions, such as their bags, nets, etc., and some of their weapons. They sometimes stick four forked sticks into the ground, to a height of about a hand breadth above the surface, at the four corners of the bed, place two poles crosswise upon them and upon these, lengthwise, the necessary number of slats to make a sort of bedspring on which to spread skins and blankets. This type of bed is used particularly in the summer time in order to be cooler and to be free of insects and poisonous reptiles. The whites also customarily do the same thing, but they elevate their beds to a height of one or two meters above the ground to escape from tigers [jaguars--Translator]. I have slept on all of these types of beds and give my assurance that it is all a matter of habit -- nevertheless one can sleep much more comfortably on the ground. When the Indians break camp they burn all their huts.

In Mataco, "hut" or "house" is said in two ways: "hauet" and "hepp" ("h" as in the German "haus" or "c" in "Florence"). Now "hepp" also means "smoke," "steam," "mist" and a kind of plant which looks like mist at a distance; "hepp" is also the name of steamship. And now, begging the reader's indulgence, is not the analogy perfect between this Mataco idiom and ours: calling the family or house "home" and a steamship "steam"? This is one more mental approximation between the Mataco man and the Aryan man.

The spear is stood upright at the entrance to the house, and to one side are the bow and arrows, which lend a certain warlike appearance which [178] is pleasing. The houses are not constructed symmetrically, but nevertheless an attempt is made to leave, between each row of huts, a wide street-like space.

It is a pleasure to see their fires when they are cooking. On the very top are earthenware pots which contain various roots and wild fruits, which usually need several changes of water. Among these there is a type of bean which is both good and palatable, and a root which is between a sweet potato and an Irish potato. The pots are made and fire-hardened by the Indian women, who work them with care.

When the time for eating arrives, which, in the camp, is usually at eleven A.M. and at nightfall, fish on spits are brought out and crackle and hiss and smoke and drip in a way to make one's mouth water. On occasion a piece of meat from some animal will grace the

M 192 463 indicates "possession" or "deposit"; gúu indicates "make," "maker"; kiá is "means," that is that which is used to procure something. for example: "fish" is yacq-set; "fisherman," yacq-set-quiá; "arrow" is lúték; "arrow maker" lutek-guú; "arrow owner," lutek-'hi. By virtue of this same particle, the first time they saw a trunk and a bird cage they called them, and still call them, imai-hi, that is, "clothes keeper"; huen-tié-hi, that is, "bird keeper."

M 286 One of the more advanced industries is that of weaving for which, as I have already reported, they do not use a shuttle but a broad piece of wood about a hand's breadth long with which they press the wool by hand. Another industry is the making of nets M [415] which are often as long as fifteen or twenty meters. Of all their belongings, however, nothing is superior to their bags, which are elegant and made to be very elastic. According to their contents these bags can stretch to an extraordinary size without the mesh's M [531] opening too widely and thus allowing the objects to fall out. They habitually decorate them with patterns, mostly geometrical ones such as parallel lines, triangles and squares.

M 396 The canoe making craft deserves special mention. They are made from a single trunk of the large and corklike yuchan tree which they hollow out roughly and then launch.

M 412 The tools which those savages use are the shells of a kind of large oyster or clam which abounds in the Chaco lakes. They also use jaguar teeth, hard wood, and the jaws of fish such as the palometa, with which they shave their heads and the little hair which grows on their faces.

M ● 323 [214] Not only are they not ignorant of the ceramic art, but it is in this one art that they most closely approach us in quality.

C M 313 171 Cooking must have contributed much to the discoveries of this industry, but Indian piety regarding the dead is what has determined the major advances and relative progress in the art. It is precisely the Matacos, Tobas, Chunupis and others who do not bury their dead in ceramic vessels who have only rough, unpolished cooking pots, while the Indians who live in Santiago, and the Chiriguanos of Bolivia, although they do have small imperfect jars, have others which are very carefully polished, painted and decorated with small raised nubs, in the largest and most beautiful of which they deposit their dead.

2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909)1919
SK6 Choroti
Mataco SI7

323
531
516
291

Fig. 66. A. Mataco-Vejos woman impressing a finger-print ornament on the rim of an earthenware vessel.